(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are proposed to be taken to save these companies from closure ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) and (b) The operations of public sector undertakings viz. Hindustan Copper Limited, Hindustan Zinc Limited and National Aluminium Company Limited were adversely affected during 1993-94 on account of fall in the international market (London Metal Exchange) prices of copper, zinc, lead and aluminium and to some extent due to lowering of customs duty on import of these metals. As the cost of production of copper from low grade indigenous ores is much higher than international prices of copper, Hindustan Copper had to sell its production of copper at competitive prices. Hindustan Zinc Ltd. had to curtail production of load due to lower demand and depressed international prices. Provisional results indicate that Hindustan Copper Ltd. is likely to incur a loss of Rs. 76.37 crores during 1993-94 while Hindustan Zinc is likely to incur a loss of Rs. 10.00 crores in 1993-94. The annual accounts of these companies are, however, yet to be finalised.

Though the fall in LME prices and import liberalisation adversely affected their profitability, NALCO, and BALCO would earn profits by increasing sales in the domestic market.

(c) The budget proposals of Government for 1994-95 include proposal for rationalisation of import duty structure, levy of countervailing duties, reduction on customs duty on capital imports etc. on non-ferrous metals. The PSUs are also revamping their operations and undertaking expansion of capacities, phasing out of uneconomic units, innovative marketing strategy to maximise sales, and capital restructuring besides, efficient management of physical and financial resources, etc.

Assistance for Latur Earthquake Victims

*376 SHRI M. A. BABY : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the total amount received so far by the different committees for relief and rehabilitation in connection with the Latur earthquake;

(b) the details of the amount received from abroad including assistance by international financial agencies for the same; and

(c) the details of the different relief and rehabilitation activities already undertaken and the projects and programmes being implemented with details of the expenditure incurred for each work ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Ground Water Level in Madhya Pradesh

*377. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether State Government of Madhya Pradesh had forwarded a scheme to the Central Government pointing out that ground water level is gradually going down in some parts of Madhya Pradesh because of less rainfall and over exploitation of ground water;

(b) if so, whether the State Government had also urged the Central Government to get it examined in detail from experts to identify measures which could quickly recharge the ground-water reserves;

(c) if so, whether Government have considered the proposal made by Madhya Pradesh Government;

(d) whether the Central Government are also considering ground water recharging investigation by providing special Central assistance to the States; and

(e) if so, how much assistance has been given to Madhya Pradesh for the years 1989-90, 90-91, 91-92, 92-93 and 1993-94 ?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government of Madhya Pradesh had requested the regional office of the Central Ground Water Board at Bhopal to examine feasibility for artificial recharge in 19 areas of the State where ground water level is gradually going down.

(c) Board's comments in regard to feasibility of artificial recharge in the concerned areas have been furnished to the State Government.

(d) The Central Ground Water Board have formulated a scheme for providing assistance to the States for recharging ground water in critical blocks having over exploitation of ground water in the States which is still under examination.

(e) Does not arise.

Delhi School of Economics MOU with Italian Institute for Foreign Trade

*378. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKAR DAVE : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Delhi School of Economics has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade (ICF).

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which India is likely to be benefited by it?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Department of Commerce at Delhi School of Economics (University of Delhi) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade (ICE) on 3rd March, 1994. The MOU has been signed considering that ICE intends to enter into an agreement for promoting the Italian image abroad and disseminating information regarding the economic and industrial situation of friendly and partner countries in order to propogate the internationalisation of market and business and that in the context of their respective activities, the two Institutions agree to a reciprocal collaboration to carry out initiatives seeking to increase and embellish the passage of information between the two countries.

The MOU envisages a series of initiatives financially supported by ICE for :

— establishing and developing channels for exchange of economic and industrial information pertaining to the two countries;

— enabling the interaction of professionals from the academic and business spheres from both countries by organizing workshops, seminars and conferences in Italy and India, dealing mainly with bilateral trade, with the participation of leading academicians and representatives among the main Italian business groups;

— constituting an award on a prominent personality in business, research or economics, who has also made significant and innovative contributions to further strengthen economic relations between India and Italy;

— organising study tours, seminars, meetings and visits with representatives of Italian companies for groups of Indian post-graduate and research scholars, and faculty members;

— providing scholarships to meritorious foreign students for conducting research projects in foreign trade, promotional activities, market analysis and industrial collaborations.

In order to ensure continuity of these joint activities and to maintain a regular flow of information, a Committee would be set up, comprising of representatives from both countries, whose task would be to frame out a common programme for future initiatives.

The Committee would comprise of three members from both sides and would be presided by a government representative from the host country.

In the first phase of this collaboration there will be no financial implications for the Department of Commerce of the Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi.

The present memorandum would continue for one year and would be automatically renewed every year except on cancellation of the same by any of the two parties which decision would be communicated three months before the date of renewal of the contract.

Accordingly to information provided by Delhi University, the MOU between the two institutions is expected to enable both the countries to share their expertise for global support and operation of business in the two countries and provide opportunities to share academic and research material. It will provide opportunities for faculty and students exchange and to organise joint seminars, conferences and inter-country workshops. These will be beneficial for developing expertise in the areas of global economic and business operation and also provide quality support at policy and functional levels to government organisations. In addition, the following specific advantages are, inter-alia, to occur :

(i) Providing better exposure and training to Indian students and faculty members.

(ii) Organising study visits and tours in Italy and India.

(iii) Supporting efforts of Indian business firms in their global operations, supplementing material, financial and technological resources and managerial expertise.

(iv) Providing direct access to Italian markets and markets of the European countries for Indian business.

(v) Academic exchange and liaison between Italian universities and the University of Delhi, specifically in the areas of business education, research and university level training.

(vi) Increasing understanding and cultural interactions between the two countries.

(vii) Strengthening India-Italy partnership at all levels.

Bigger Role for Private Sector in Mining

*379. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM :
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA :

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :